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New AmeriCorps Project to Reduce Homelessness and Expand Economic Opportunity in Salt Lake County

Operation AmeriCorps will support 50 AmeriCorps members over two years; \$1.6 million investment in the community

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH – The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that administers AmeriCorps, today announced that Salt Lake County will be one of 10 communities nationwide to become part of the agency's new Operation AmeriCorps initiative.

Salt Lake County, through its Community Resources and Development Division, will work with area nonprofits to support 50 AmeriCorps members over the next two years to reduce homelessness and expand economic opportunity within the community. AmeriCorps members will provide direct services focused on housing and job placement, as well as access to medical, health, child care, and employment services. AmeriCorps VISTA members will recruit, train, and manage additional volunteers, collect and analyze data, and work with other social service agencies to identify resources that would enable homeless and formerly homeless to access critical services.

"I salute Salt Lake County for its visionary program that will have a significant impact on the community and its residents who are homeless or facing homelessness," said Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "Through Operation AmeriCorps, Salt Lake County will continue transforming the lives of residents and providing economic opportunities that will strengthen the community."

"Service is a powerful solution to local problems," said Utah Senator Orrin G. Hatch. "Operation AmeriCorps is a model for local, practical, results-oriented service. When Senator Kennedy and I authored the Serve America Act in 2009, we envisioned using national service to strengthen communities and help families overcome poverty. I commend Utah's Commission on Volunteers and Salt Lake County for building an innovative service program that will facilitate economic opportunities for some of our state's most vulnerable families. "

"We are honored that Utah is one of the first states in the country to receive Operation AmeriCorps funding. This additional resource will allow us to continue our efforts to support those facing chronic homelessness within the state." said Lt. Governor Spencer Cox.

“We know – because the data shows us – that job placement, job training, and access to childcare creates a path towards security and self-reliance for some homeless individuals,” said Salt Lake County Mayor Ben McAdams. “The Operation AmeriCorps grant will bolster Salt Lake County’s efforts to work collectively, across agencies, towards a common goal of getting homeless individuals and families off the streets and into safe homes.”

The Corporation for National and Community Service, through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Social Innovation Fund programs, supports numerous nonprofit, faith-based, and public organizations across the nation addressing homelessness. CNCS CEO Wendy Spencer is a member of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, which coordinates the federal response to homelessness by creating partnerships at every level of government and maximizing the effectiveness of the federal government in contributing to the end of homelessness.

Salt Lake County is the sixth organization in the nation to receive Operation AmeriCorps funding, an initiative launched by CNCS last fall for local and tribal governments to use national service as a transformative catalyst to address a high priority community challenge. Previously announced Operation AmeriCorps grantees include New York City; Tucson, AZ; Flint, MI; Pawtucket, RI; and Bloomfield, Iowa. Additional Operation AmeriCorps grantees will be announced later this month.

The federal agency’s investment includes \$680,586 in AmeriCorps funding over two years, contingent on appropriations and performance. In addition, AmeriCorps members completing their service are eligible to earn a total of \$286,500 in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards to pay for higher education or pay back student loans. This federal investment of \$967,086 is projected to generate an additional \$681,680 in local cash and in-kind matching contributions, bringing the total two-year investment to more than \$1.6 million.

The Operation AmeriCorps funding builds on CNCS’ existing investment of \$13 million in communities across Utah. These federal dollars leverage an additional \$6.6 million in other resources. This funding supports more than 6,900 AmeriCorps members and Senior Corps volunteers serving at nearly 660 locations in the state. These national service participants across the state tutor and mentor children, support veterans and military families, provide health services, restore the environment, and more.

The program will begin recruiting individuals for these new AmeriCorps positions that will start next fall. These full-time AmeriCorps positions provide a living allowance, training, health coverage, a \$5,730 college scholarship, and the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of Salt Lake County residents.

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The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than five million Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. For more information, visit [NationalService.gov](https://www.nationalservice.gov).